

THE LITERARY OUTLOOK

NEW SYSTEM OF PUBLISHING BOOKS
WHICH REGULATES PRICE.A Small Edition of What May Be a
Successful Novel—Queer Course
of a Publisher.

Correspondent of the Indianapolis Journal.

NEW YORK, Dec. 6.—The unit system of publication has not yet invaded America, but it is so sane a method of regulating prices by quantity that doubtless we shall have it before long. The system has only been recently introduced in London, though it has been in use by a Leipzig publisher for some thirty odd years. It consists merely in fixing the price of books according to the number of pages. The pages are supposed to be of the uniform 12mo. size, and twenty-five make a unit in the case of the London publisher, who has just taken the matter up. The price per unit is one-half pence (one cent). For a paper cover one penny is added; for cloth binding five pence, and for leather ten pence. A book of 250 pages bound in cloth, therefore, will cost 25 cents. Thus far the London publisher has brought out books of a kind on which there is no royalty to be paid, but they have been books which are worth having or keeping. It would be a good thing if this system could be introduced here, simply because there is a great need of some method for publishing books which would be simpler than the present. There is a most deplorable lack of harmony, both as to size and price of books. A copyright of unwritten law insists that a copyrighted novel, exceeding 50,000 words in length, shall be made up in book form at a retail price of \$1.50. As the system of net selling has not been extended to books of fiction, this price of \$1.50 is itself fiction. No one nowadays expects to pay more than \$1 or \$1.50 for a novel which is listed at \$1.50.

I was told on reliable authority the other day that one of the prominent New York publishers had bound up but five copies of a novel which since has been selected as one of the best American novels by a leading English critic. The circumstances came about in this manner: The novel was accepted during the absence of the senior member of the firm, and on his return this gentleman expressed great displeasure. The author insisted upon holding the publishers to the contract, and, in spite of the fact that the publishers stated to him that they would not announce the book or advertise it in any way whatever, he was foolish enough to allow them to set up the copy and bind five books in accordance with the letter of the contract. Since that time the author has been wise enough to secure the rights of the book, and the publisher is going to bring it out next spring. The book stands a good chance of being one of the successes of the season, and it seems very strange that the matter should have had such a history as this. The author has been taken up by his present publishers, and is now receiving from them a regular stipend. Under this arrangement he is engaged in another novel, which he will have finished early in the spring. With the praise of the London Academy for this young writer ringing in our ears, it is reasonable to infer that his former publishers will regret not having given him better treatment. The binding up of five copies of a book in order to carry out all that the publishing contract legally demands is one of the most unheard-of proceedings—particularly difficult to understand in the light of the author's cordial reception by the leading critics of England into the ranks of the best authors of the year.

Enough books have been published this fall to make interesting comparisons. The most noted authors—Kipling, Hope, Weyman, Zuck, etc.—were first in the field, a fact which on the whole is an advantage to the lesser literary lights who were fortunate enough to be delayed until the season was under way. But the most noteworthy feature of the present output is the falling off in sales of the famous authors. Kipling's "Kim" easily ranks as the best book of the year in fiction, yet, as one said of it recently, "Kipling has written a book in 'Kim' that will make more fame for him than money. However, as Kipling received \$25,000 for the first rights of 'Kim' he may be regarded as ahead of the game." Of the twelve best books of fiction selected by a London committee only two or three have exceeded a sale of 50,000 copies. "But for the blessed prop and stay of serial rights," says one author, "I should be in the poorhouse," and doubtless this is the situation with many other of the notables. Some of these books had a falling off of 50 per cent. in book sales.

The publication of "The Life and Letters of John Richard Green" recently revealed to many the reason why the "History of the English People," by this distinguished author, did not treat more of the part English literature played in national affairs after 1820. In one of his letters Mr. Green explains that when he reached the year 1890 he was suddenly impressed with the fact that sometime and somewhere his book must come to an end. His publishers insisted that 500 pages should be the limit. It was necessary then to let some of his matter go, and the author deliberately chose literature as the part which he should throw overboard. At some length he explains his objections to the coming of this decision. He was anxious to do justice to the famous writers of his time for one thing, but the true historical spirit, as he understood it, urged him to sacrifice his personal preferences. Literature, he explained, ceased to stand in the forefront of national characteristics after 1890. Science and industry played the greater part, and therefore he was obliged to let them take precedence in his work. Green's letters were edited by Mr. Leslie Stephens, who has shown his superior fitness for editorial tasks by his work on the national biography, Shakespeare, etc. He has shown, or rather the letters themselves have shown, that Green was something more than a historian, something more than a mere lover of books. He left a fascinating record of his own life which shows unmistakable literary quality.

Richard Whiting, known in this country as the author of "No. 5 John Street," was reported to be dangerously ill not long ago. He is now back at his desk, working at another novel. The long years which Mr. Whiting served as leader writer for the London Daily News doubtless had much to do with his illness. Most of his newspaper work was done at night, and for several years Mr. Whiting spent parts of his days studying the sorts of conditions which are shown so vividly in "John Street." To this day American visitors in London insist on having No. 5 John Street pointed out to them because they could not believe the house did not actually exist. The author compiled whole volumes of notes on slum and labor subjects, which became the material for his book.

Miss Lafeyette McLaws is a young woman who makes a bid for fame in "When the Land Was Young," a historical novel which has been well received. The reason

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CASH OR CREDIT

THE VOICE OF THE PULPIT

SPIRIT OF REJOICING: A TIMELY, SEASONABLE SHORT SERMON.

By the Rev. Clarence A. Barbour, D. D.,
Pastor of Lake Avenue Baptist Church, Rochester, N. Y.

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice."—Philippians IV. 4.

The letter to the Philippians is a letter of sunshine. It is cheerful reading, this letter of Paul to a church which had so cheerfully and generously ministered to his necessities. Thirteen times in this short letter do the words joy and rejoice occur. Surely the great apostle could not have closed his series of letters to the churches with one more beautiful, like a clear sunset after the storm has beaten itself out.

Joys! We love the sound of the word. We eagerly catch at the bright-colored garments! What strange creatures we are! One day the joy of those who sing that the lines have fallen unto them in pleasant places, the next the grief of those who refuse to be comforted. In one house gladness over the return of one who has long been absent, in the next sorrow over one who has gone. So in nature. One day joy and praise to God seem written everywhere, graven on the rocks, inscribed on the sky, the sunshine lying warm over all; the next, dark clouds cover the heavens, the rain falls heavily upon the drenched earth, the wind wails in the swaying pines.

Rejoicing in the Lord is not conditioned by circumstances or environment. This is indicated by the very words of the text and the corresponding topic of the letter in which they are found. It was a stolid age. The best philosophy of the day was stoicism. There were many noble features about this philosophy, but in stoicism the ideas of God and of nature were merged in that of an inevitable destiny. To submit one's self to fate was the highest ideal, uncomplainingly to accept the decrees of an iron-clad and heartless destiny. From the consistent exponent of such a system you could never have a cry like that of the apostle; you might as well look for it from the lips of a marble image.

Great Britain, with her colonies, owns nearly one-half of the total tonnage belonging to the marine of forty nations, or 14,000,000 tons out of a total of 25,000,000.

Rejoicing in the Lord is not conditioned by circumstances or environment, and yet how much there is in each of our lives which should make those lives songs of praise. We, all of us, have our peculiar blessings, but I mention some of the most common, yet most precious. We have been thinking of them in our recent Thanksgiving season. The joy of health, of feeling the red blood leaping in the arteries, of having the power to draw long breaths of pure air, of that vitality which rejoices in the very fact of existence, in very joy at

The joy of home, where there are those who believe in us, who trust us, where, however much the world outside may jostle us and irritate us in our daily battle, always in the home the loving welcome, the home rest and peace. What joy in a true home!

The joy of friends, real friends, those who give as well as receive, those from whom we can always expect joy in our successes and sympathy in our failures, good men, true and pure women—happy is he who numbers among his friends such as these.

THE CHIEF JOY OF ALL.

Above all, the joy in Christ, the joy of a soul which knows that all things are working together for good, for all things do thus work for those who love God. This above all else, I say, because to him who has the Christ-joy in his heart, rejoicing always is possible. If health, if home, if friends also are his, then the joy is deepened and intensified, but even absence of these cannot cause the Christ-joy to cease. Joy in the Lord is possible even if circumstances are unfavorable.

Rejoicing in the Lord is a duty, apart from inclination. A duty to rejoice, you say? Yes, a duty to rejoice, and this for at least two reasons. It is our duty to rejoice because God desires our praise. Love, human and divine, desires recognition and appreciation. We honor Him by taking the cup of thanksgiving and calling as we drink, upon His name. Any other course would be unnatural and condemnable. You remember the words of the Saviour, speaking of the one leper who returned to give thanks to Him, "were there

not ten cleansed; where are the nine?" Wherever God's love is recognized and His grace is welcomed, praise should spring forth as naturally as the earliest crocus springs from the cold bosom of the earth at the touch of April sun.

It is our duty also to rejoice because it is our duty to exercise the greatest possible influence for Christ, and that is best done by showing to others a life animated by joy in the Lord. You remember Hawthorne's picture of the minister in colonial days who wore ever before his face a black veil. Wherever he went, always the gloomy shade was before him, so that when children at play saw his somber figure afar off they left their merry sports and ran away in fear. So you may have seen Christians who seemed enveloped in a contagious melancholy which made them objects of repulsion rather than of attraction to others. It is objected that our Lord himself was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. His brief earthly life filled with trial, oppressed with burdens? True, but do you suppose for one instant that the Saviour was an object of gloom in the sunlight of Palestine? No! That could not be. The One who took the children in His arms and blessed them, the One to whom the children came, was not a man of gloom though a man of sorrows. The keen instincts of children are seldom at fault, and one to whose arms the children come has a joy in his heart that answers to the children's joy.

CAUSES OF FAILURE.

And now let me speak of two of the most fruitful causes of a failure to rejoice in the Lord, with a suggestion of their remedy.

A lack of rejoicing in the Lord is sometimes caused by a melancholy nature. I do not forget that some are so unfortunate as to have that burden. It may have been stamped upon them by the iron heel of some sorrow which in early days cursed the later years. It may have come by heredity. However, it has come and there it is. A spiritual hypochondria is an unpleasant companion as a physical hypochondria. Melancholy is a disease, in large measure. Now suppose that any one of us is so burdened, what shall we do? While we have it in our power to direct the will, focus the attention upon happy things. You can fix your mind upon your own imperfections, your faults, your sins, or you can fix it upon God's mercy, God's grace, God's love, and the thought will clear the darkened windows, open wide the door and let a little sunshine in. Take your concordance and study in your Bible such words as joy, rejoice, singing, praise, peace, and the like, until your melancholy fades away in very shame of its own existence.

Lack of rejoicing in the Lord is usually caused by half-heartedness in the Christian life. There is no joy in any kind of half-hearted work. Rejoicing in the Lord will never come by approaching the promises of God as you would approach a piece of newly frozen ice, cautiously resting the weight upon it, first one foot and then the other, trembling lest the ominous crack should threaten a descent to the water beneath. Trust wholly the promises of God. Throw your whole weight upon them fearlessly. Make your Christianity your life, dear friends; make a religion of business and a business of religion. Let people see that your Christianity is not a cloak put on to hide from them unworthy actions and impure motives, but that it is the very vital breath of your being.

If our ears are not dulled by the sounds of earth, the rumbling of the caravans of trade, the strident voice of society, we can catch, even now, the sound, "far, far away, like bells at evening pealing," but drawing nearer and ever nearer, the sound as of the voices of many waters. Praise there, let there be praise here, test entering through the gates into the city we find ourselves in discord with the heavenly music. "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I will say, Rejoice."

Miss Gould's Ferns.

New York Times.
Miss Helen Gould, who is, perhaps, the most popular and best-known woman in America to-day, was standing in front of a florist's the other afternoon looking at the display in the windows. An acquaintance approached and said:
"There must be something unusually attractive in there to cause you to stop and look, when you have so many beautiful flowers in your own greenhouse."
Miss Gould looked self-conscious for a moment and almost blushed when she replied:
"There are several pots of ferns in there from our greenhouse at Irvington and I tended the transplanting of them myself because they were so dainty and so nice. I was waiting by that window to hear any chance remark about them."



COULD ONLY RUN A RISK.

"Did you ever run a race on this horse?"
"Well, no; but I'll be turned if I haven't run a risk on him."



TWO OF A KIND.

Great heavens! When Robert said he saw double last night I accused him of being drunk.